

Susan twirled her baton on her fingers and then threw the baton high into the air. She caught it with one hand behind her back. Susan was practicing for the Junior Baton Team at her elementary school. Five girls would be picked for the team. Susan practiced every day because she wanted to be the best baton twirler in her class. One year ago, Susan did not have any idea what a baton was. A friend had showed her the metal stick with a rubber knob on each end and had said that people twirled the stick, threw it up into the air, and caught it just before it hit the ground. Susan had thought that was a strange idea. One day, however, she had tried her friend's baton. Susan found out that it was fun to twirl the baton. After that, Susan's mother bought her a baton and Susan began to take lessons. After one year of practicing, Susan was very good at baton twirling.

On the day of the tryouts Susan sat on the gym floor with ten other girls. One by one, the girls twirled and tossed the baton for the judges. Some of the girls dropped their batons, but Susan kept her baton tossing and twirling the whole time. At last the judges announced the five girls who would be on the team. Susan's name was the first name the judges called. Susan and the other four girls jumped up and down because they had been picked for the team! The coach came up and said, "Good job, girls! I have some exciting news. This year's Junior Baton Team will be marching in the Thanksgiving Day Parade downtown." The girls stared at each other in surprise. Marching in the Thanksgiving Day Parade was a very big honor.

The girls began practicing the next day. They twirled and tossed to the music. After many weeks of practicing, the batons flew up into the air in perfect rhythm. The big day of the parade finally arrived.

The five girls lined up in front of the high school twirlers and the high school band. They felt very important to be marching as part of the high school group. The drums began to beat and the group began to march forward. Susan and the other four girls threw their batons into the air in perfect harmony. What a wonderful parade!

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